

**MARVEL**  
PG 23

WINICK

WALKER

# EXILES™

**WITH AN  
IRON FIST  
PART 1**



**DIRECT EDITION**

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**NEW YORK CITY.**  
**THE UNITED STATES CAPITAL.**




*It is a reality unlike any other. It is different in so many ways from the worlds we have come to know.*


*This reality-- this Earth-- has known plagues, wars, famine, and natural catastrophes beyond imagination.*



*But in any reality there are common facts. Such as, in times of great strife, greater leaders are made.*



*That in times of great weakness, strong leaders must assume control.*



*This was a weak and desolate planet.*



# WITH AN IRON FIST

## PART ONE

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And Tony Stark-- Iron Man-- is a strong leader.

He is not merely the President of the United States, and President for life as part of an emergency edict some ten years ago--

--he is also the undisputed monarch of Earth.

It was a long and agonizing road that brought him to power. In the end, nearly every living being on Earth begged and prayed for him to assume this mantle.

He slowly did so. With great reluctance. With a heavy heart.

What very few living beings know is that Tony Stark had planned it this way all along.

One does not take a planet by force, that is, if one wants to remain in power. It is always better to be given control.

In times of great weakness, a single individual can rise up and assume immense control. Stark knew this.

All he had to do was make the world weak enough.



He spent his early career acquiring conglomerate after conglomerate.

It was done with such care, such patience... a parent company here... a subsidiary of another three subsidiaries there... Figure-heads... untraceable origins.



In no time at all, Stark Industries had an economic stranglehold over the globe. But since Tony Stark never tightened that grip, they would never know.



Iron Man entered the world theater when The Mutant War began.



Under the command of Magneto, a worldwide army of mutants launched an unwavering attack upon all of humanity.



It pitted every super being on the globe against the mutant soldiers of Magneto. There was terrorism on American soil the likes of which had never been conceived before.



Many were lost-- both hero and civilian.



Stark had succeeded in thinning out the world's super-being population.



In return for his traitorous acts against his own race--

--Magneto promised Iron Man leadership of the remaining vestiges of humanity.



But it was unknown-- to all but a few-- which secret individual actually assisted in creating this mutant army. Funding their murderous operations over and over again.



That was the role that Stark sought, but not in the manner in which it was being granted.



Not as an underling.



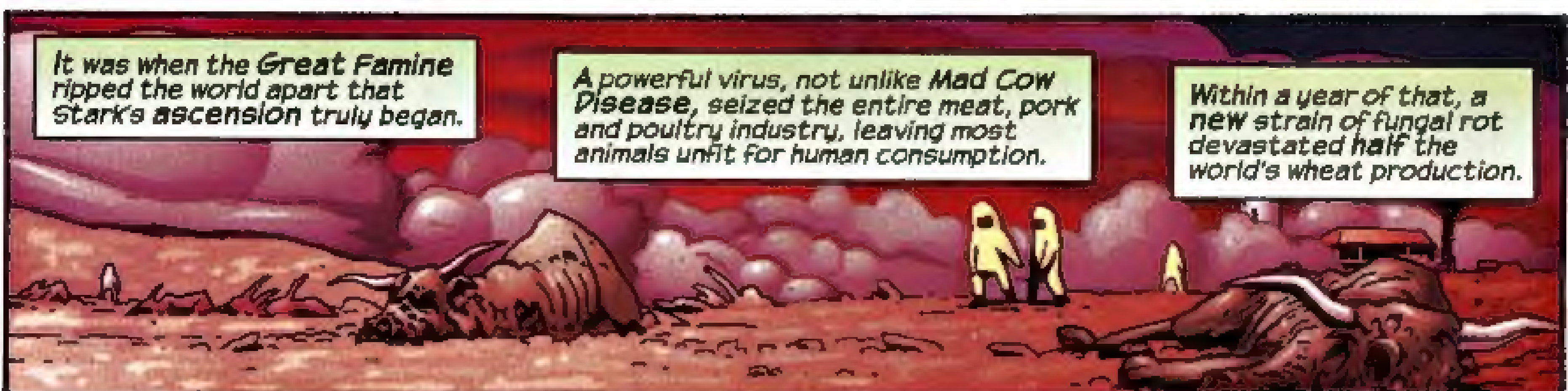
Slaying Magneto while millions watched on, Iron Man became the hero of the conflict. But a soldier does not make a leader.



It was when the Great Famine ripped the world apart that Stark's ascension truly began.

A powerful virus, not unlike Mad Cow Disease, seized the entire meat, pork and poultry industry, leaving most animals unfit for human consumption.

Within a year of that, a new strain of fungal rot devastated half the world's wheat production.

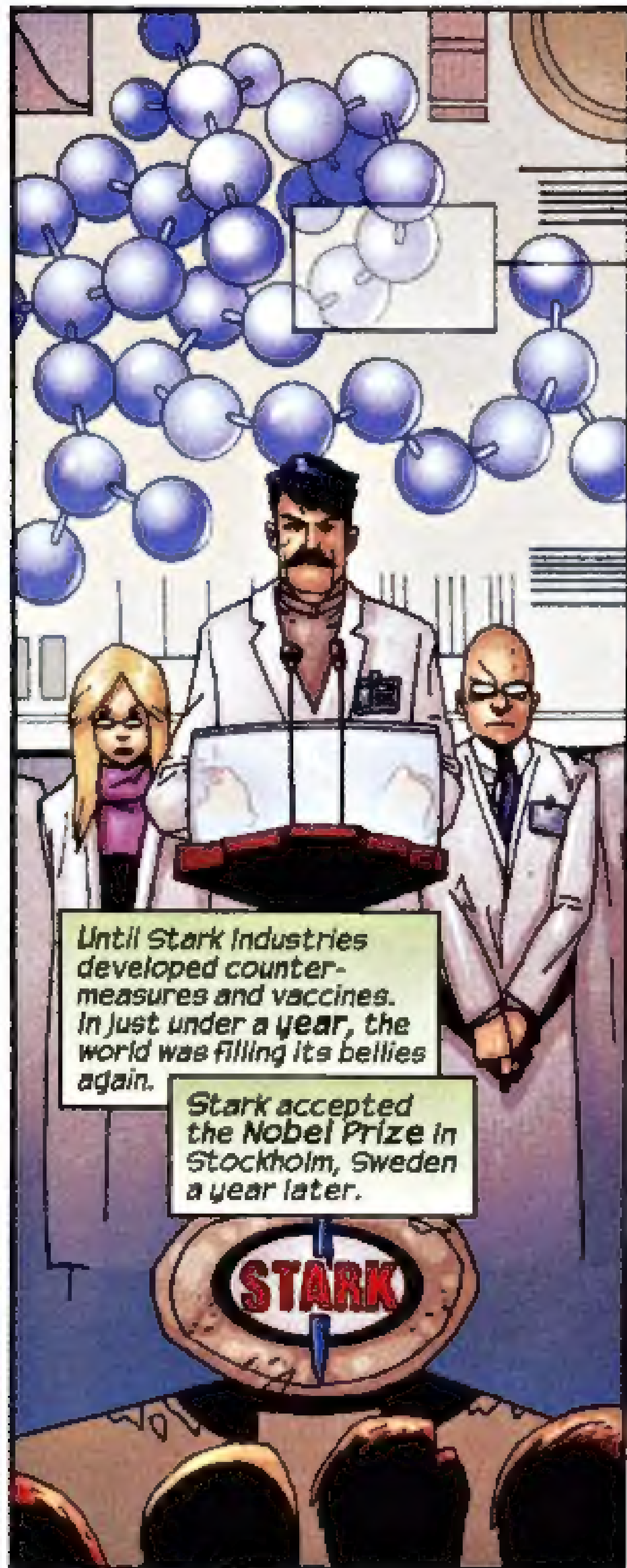






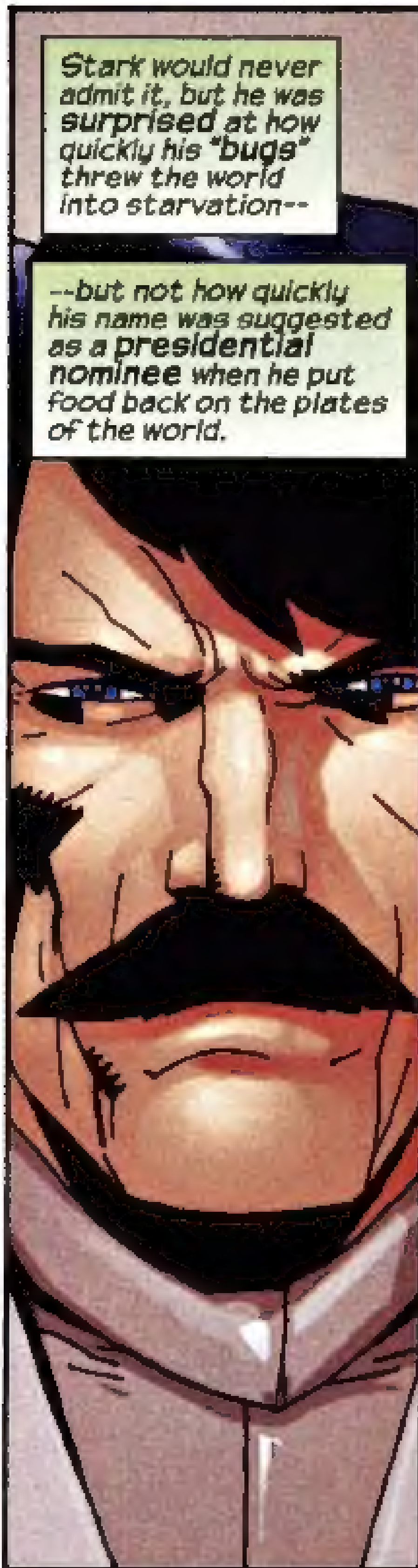
Worse than any war it ever faced, the United States felt true hunger for the first time. The rest of the globe suffered, as well.

Millions died.



Until Stark Industries developed counter-measures and vaccines. In just under a year, the world was filling its bellies again.

Stark accepted the Nobel Prize in Stockholm, Sweden a year later.



Stark would never admit it, but he was surprised at how quickly his "bugs" threw the world into starvation--

--but not how quickly his name was suggested as a presidential nominee when he put food back on the plates of the world.



Hero, scientist, savior... he won with the highest popular and electoral vote in history. He was nearing his final goal.



When he secretly developed technology to control weather and seismic activity, all the other dominoes fell into place.

Massive "natural" disasters of biblical proportions in Europe and Asia led to those countries' pleas for assistance, and of course, their willingness to relinquish control.

Economic downspins in Central America and Canada paved the way for the remainder of North America to fall under his direction.

They all came to him. He never asked. He never twisted any arms. The sun would never set on the empire of the United States.





With the world at his feet, it seemed Doctor Doom would be Stark's only true adversary.

Magneto was not the only one Stark had approached about a secret alliance.

But this time, it was Stark who was betrayed.

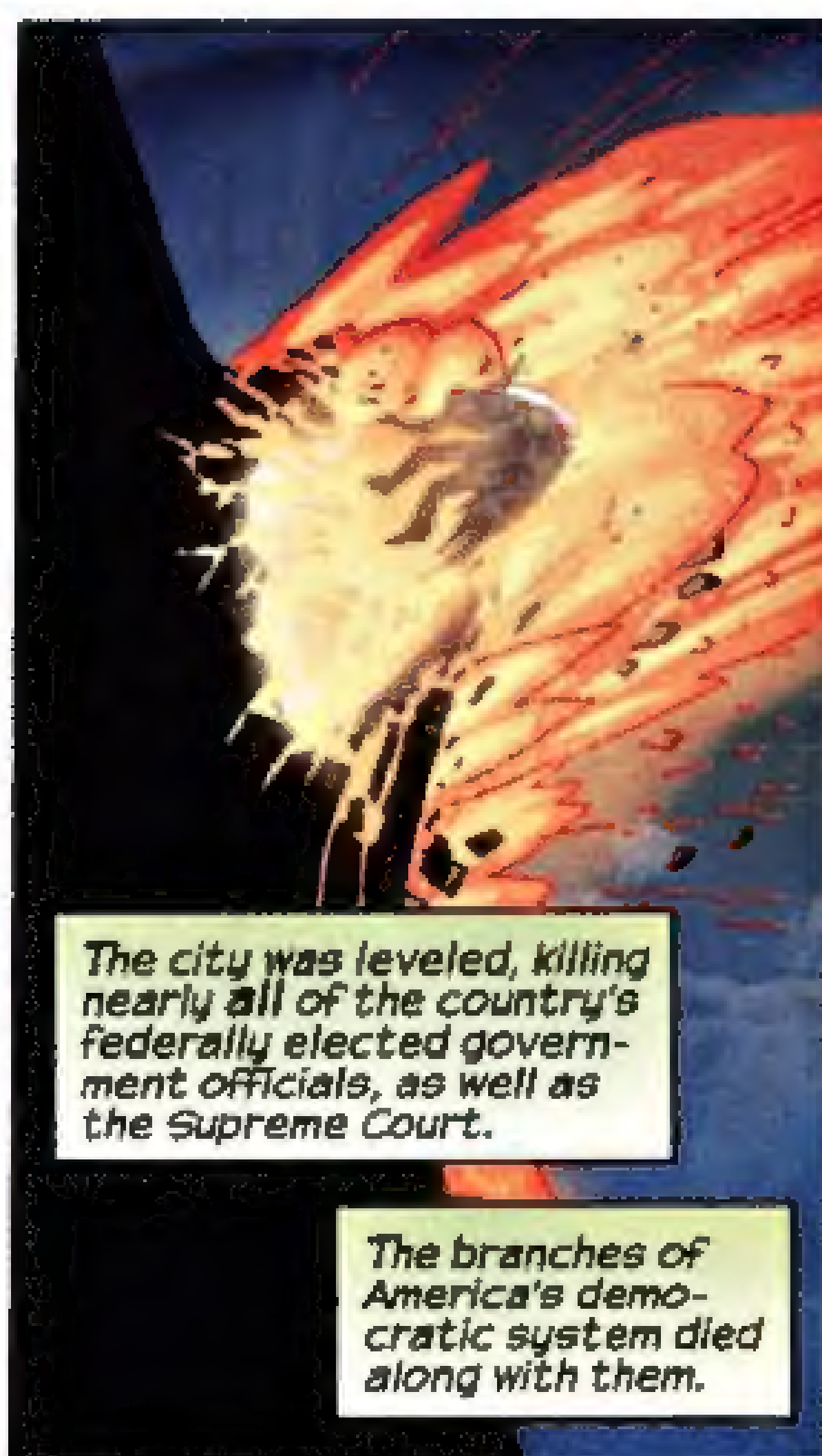


Their original agreement stipulated that Doom would launch an attack on Washington, D.C.--

--destroying the last remnants of the United States' political structure.



The leader of Latveria kept his part of the bargain.



The city was leveled, killing nearly all of the country's federally elected government officials, as well as the Supreme Court.

The branches of America's democratic system died along with them.



The blame was to fall on the last remnants of the rebel mutants' army. Their last gasp.





Unfortunately,  
Doom attempted to  
overthrow Stark.



He failed.



In the end... as  
it has been since  
that day...



...there is only Tony  
Stark-- Iron Man.

Sovereign  
of Earth.



**NEW YORK CITY**  
**THE PRESENT...**

Who wants to know this, Marcus?

Roxanne Malveer of *The National Review*, Mr. President.

I wasn't aware that *The National Review* had become a fashion periodical.

Well, no sir, but I don't think their inquiry about when you might be redesigning your armor is necessarily *fashion*.

I know. I was being facetious.

Remind them that my current armor was specifically designed to aid in the *recovery* from my battle with Doom.

Inasmuch as I'd like to update it, I'm told by my physicians that it will be at *least* three years before that day comes.

Let's have the *Washington Bulletin* run an op-ed comparing President Stark's heroism to FDR, a president wheelchair-bound from polio.

No. We *won't* do that. Just let the quote ride as is...

...and *speaking* of *The National Review*, I want the Editor in Chief *removed*.

When you say *removed*, sir, do you mean...?

Yes. Please have her killed.

The media is *our* tool. Not her e#s% soap-box. I'm tired of her accusations and criticism.

Now, if you'll all excuse me, this broken body is *actually* due for a medical checkup.









You call this better, you quack? It looks like I shaved with a blowtorch.

No, sir, you look like you sustained a radiation blast from a foot away.

Explain to me again why I let you live?



Because, Mr. President, I am the most gifted cosmetic surgeon in history--

--and you're an enormously vain priss who wants to look like a fashion model again.

Oh, yeah. That was it.



Sir? Sir!? We have some very--

Oh.



Sonofa

What is it?!

DEEDOO!

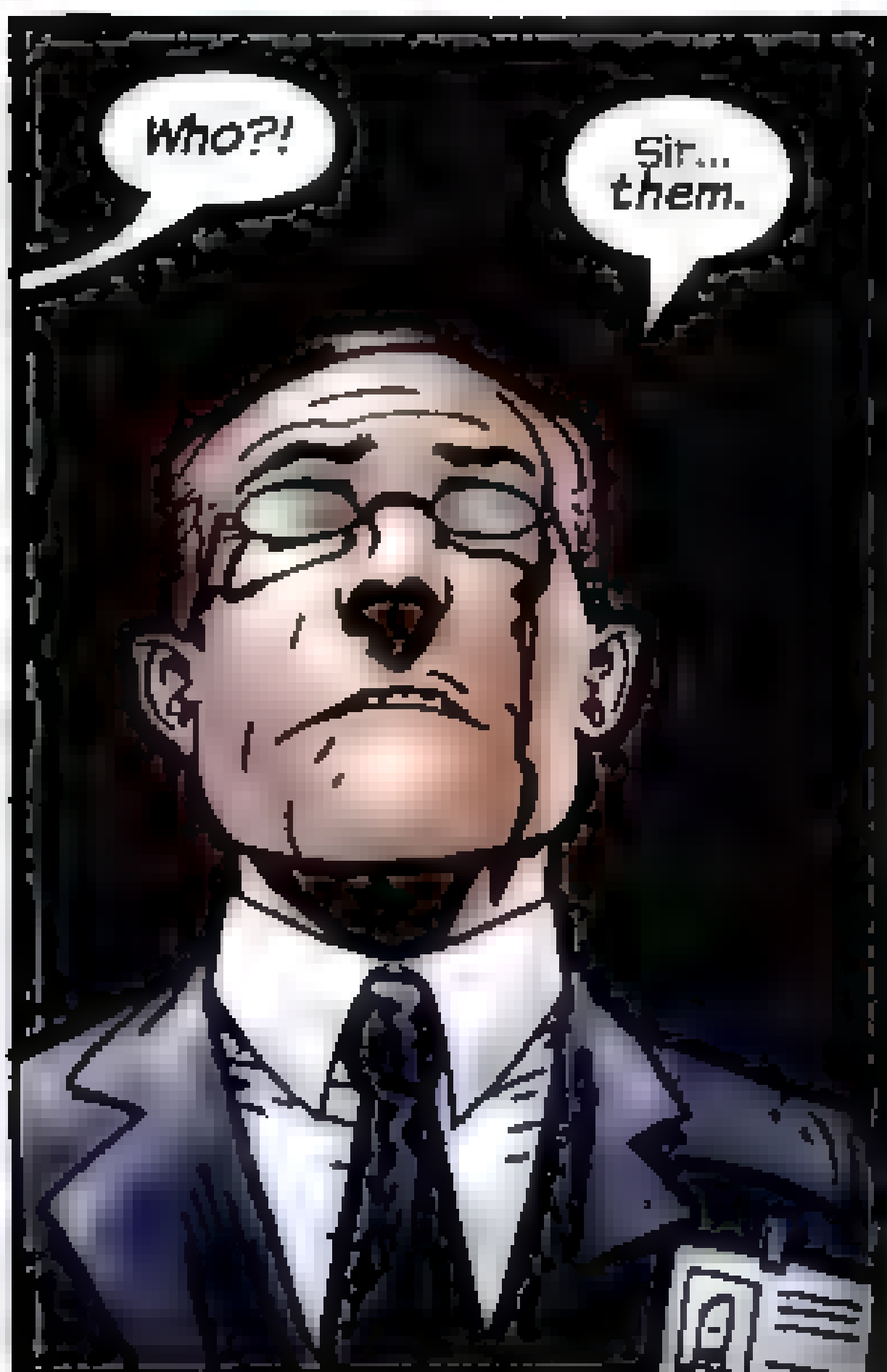


Forgive the interruption. I would never dream of--



WHAT IS IT?!

We've just gotten word from the NAS Com base in the Pacific. They think they've received a reading that could be them.



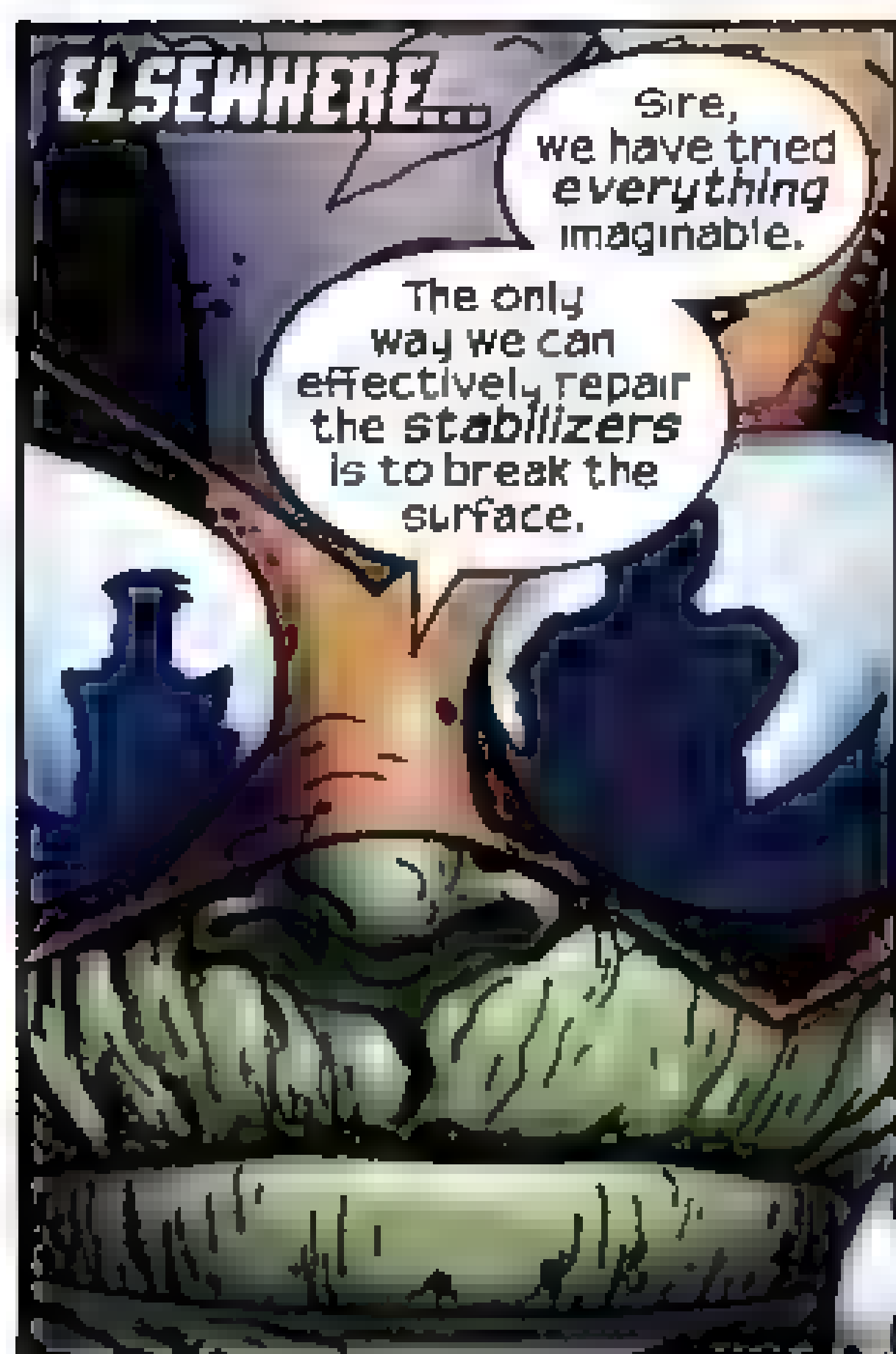
Who?!

Sir... them.



That is good news

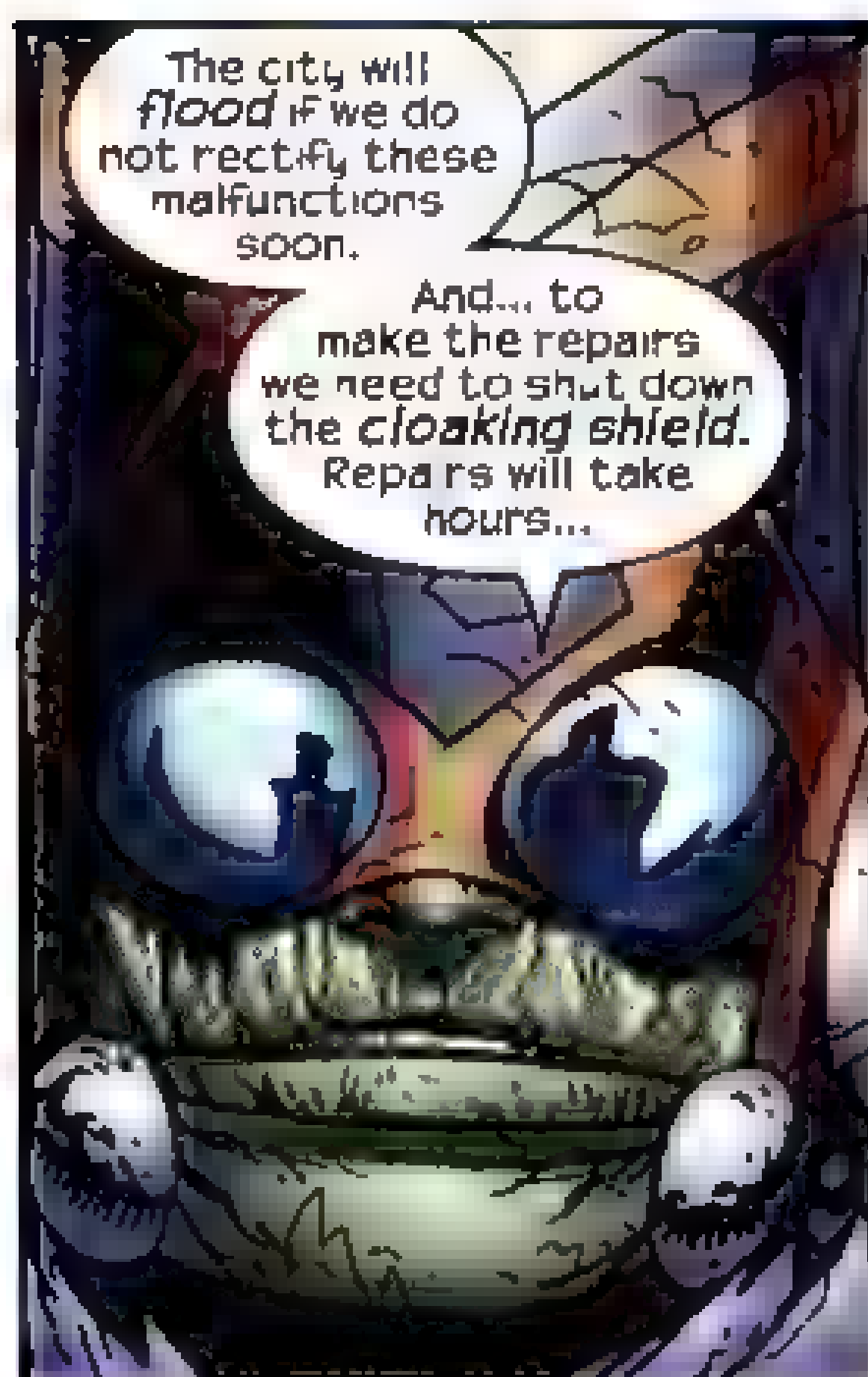




**ELSEWHERE...**

Sire,  
we have tried  
**everything**  
imaginable.

The only  
way we can  
effectively repair  
the **stabilizers**  
is to break the  
surface.



The city will  
**flood** if we do  
not rectify these  
malfunctions  
soon.

And... to  
make the repairs  
we need to shut down  
the **cloaking shield**.  
Repairs will take  
hours...



...but I fear that even the  
**briefest** exposure will allow  
our enemies to obtain an  
energy signature and discover  
our whereabouts. If we have  
not been detected  
already...

Sire, we  
**must** face  
the harsh  
reality.

Our days  
of hiding have  
**ended**.

The  
**Inhumans** have  
come out of the  
shadows



**THE INHUMANS THRONE ROOM...**

She is **Susan Storm Richards**. The Invisible Woman. Widow of Reed Richards, Mr. Fantastic of the Fantastic Four. Queen of the Inhumans.

He is **Black Bolt**. The silent Monarch of the Inhumans, the mysterious and separatist race of super beings. Known for both their power and their singular uniqueness.

The man they are receiving counsel from is Arcutus. He is Chief Scientist of the Inhumans-- and he has brought grave news.

In this reality, the Inhumans have had to adapt to the harshness of the realm. They live in deep seclusion.

They are a  
**hunted** race.



# THE CITY OF ATTILAN DEEP BELOW THE PACIFIC OCEAN...

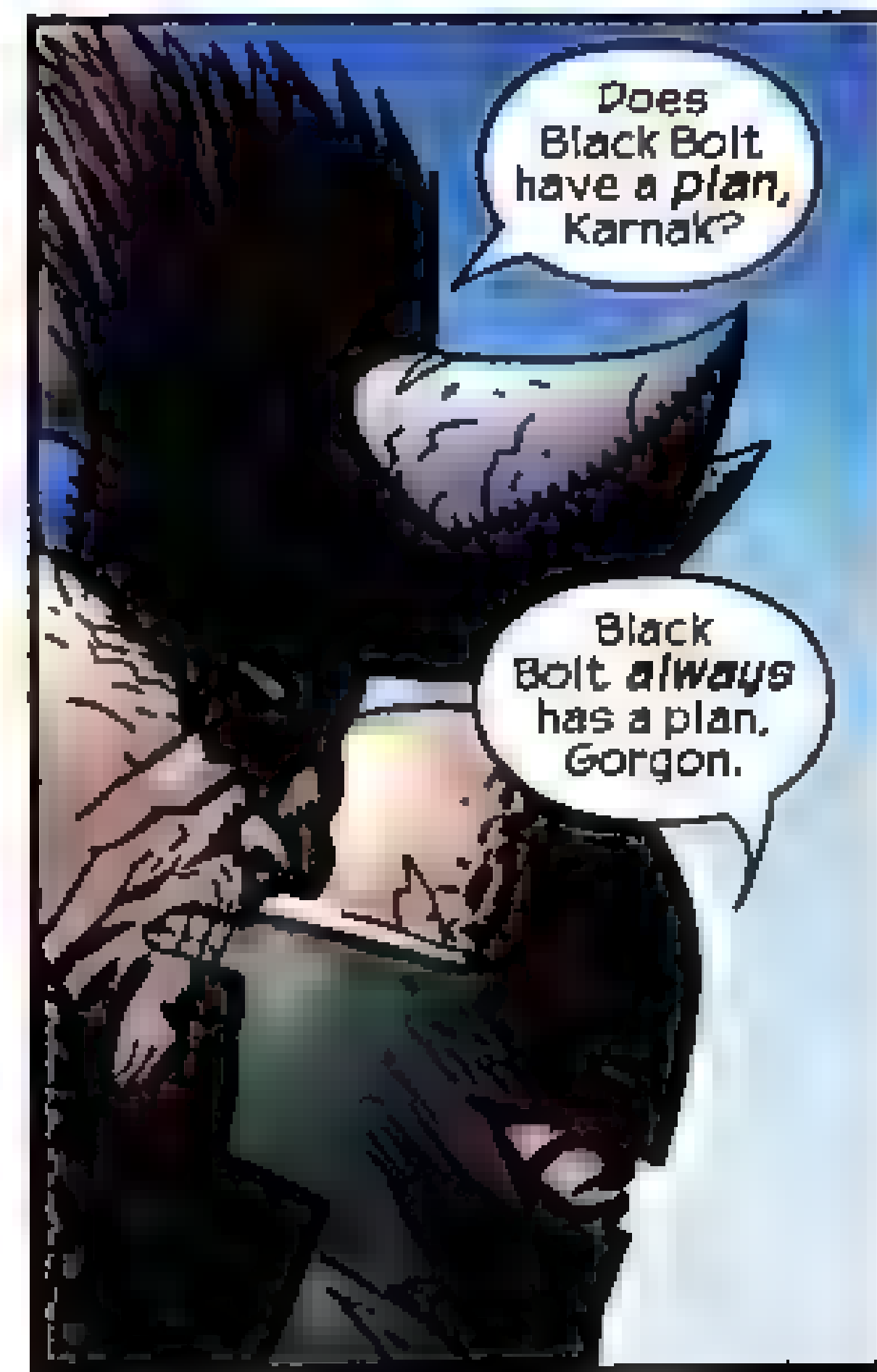
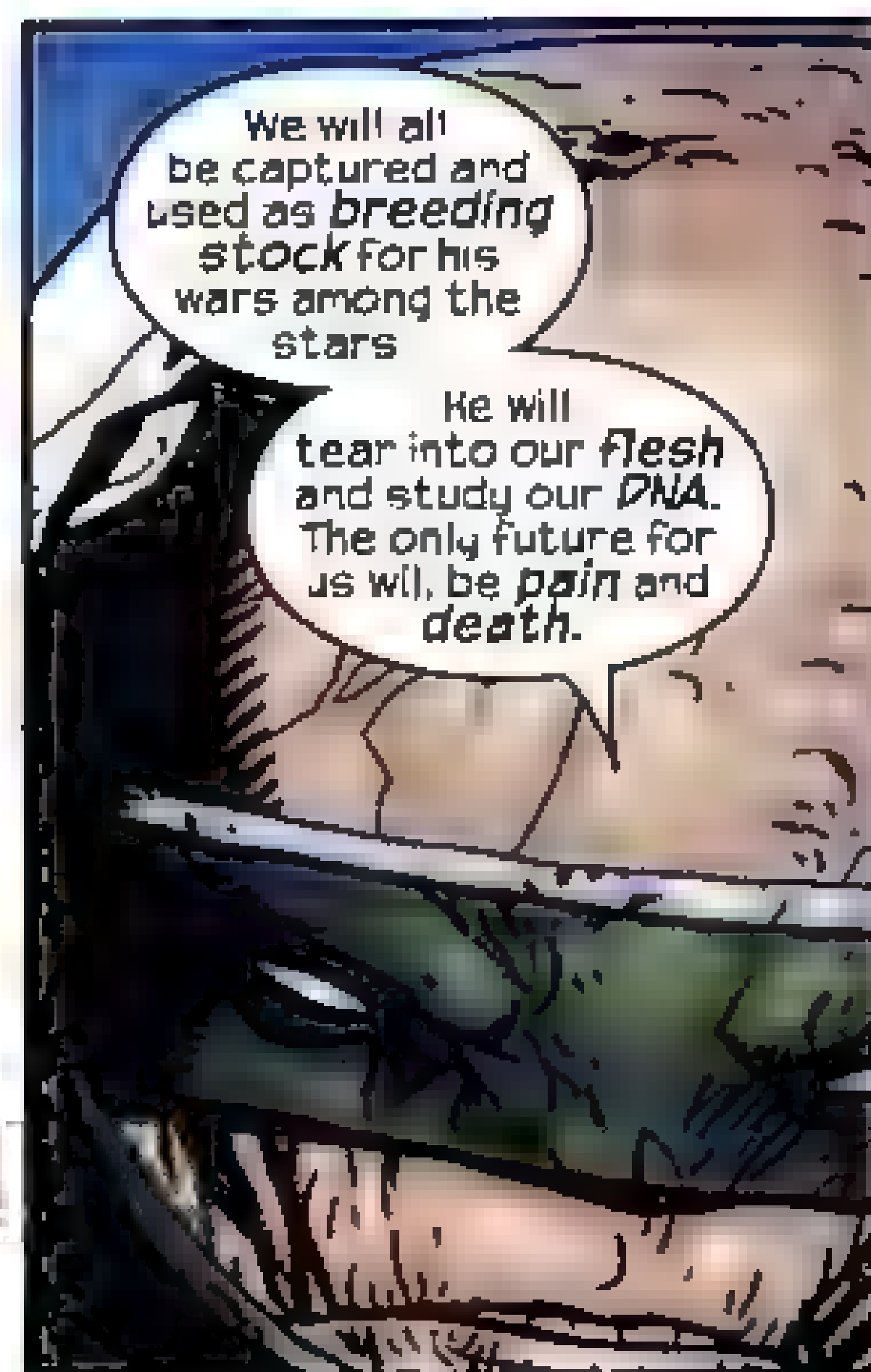
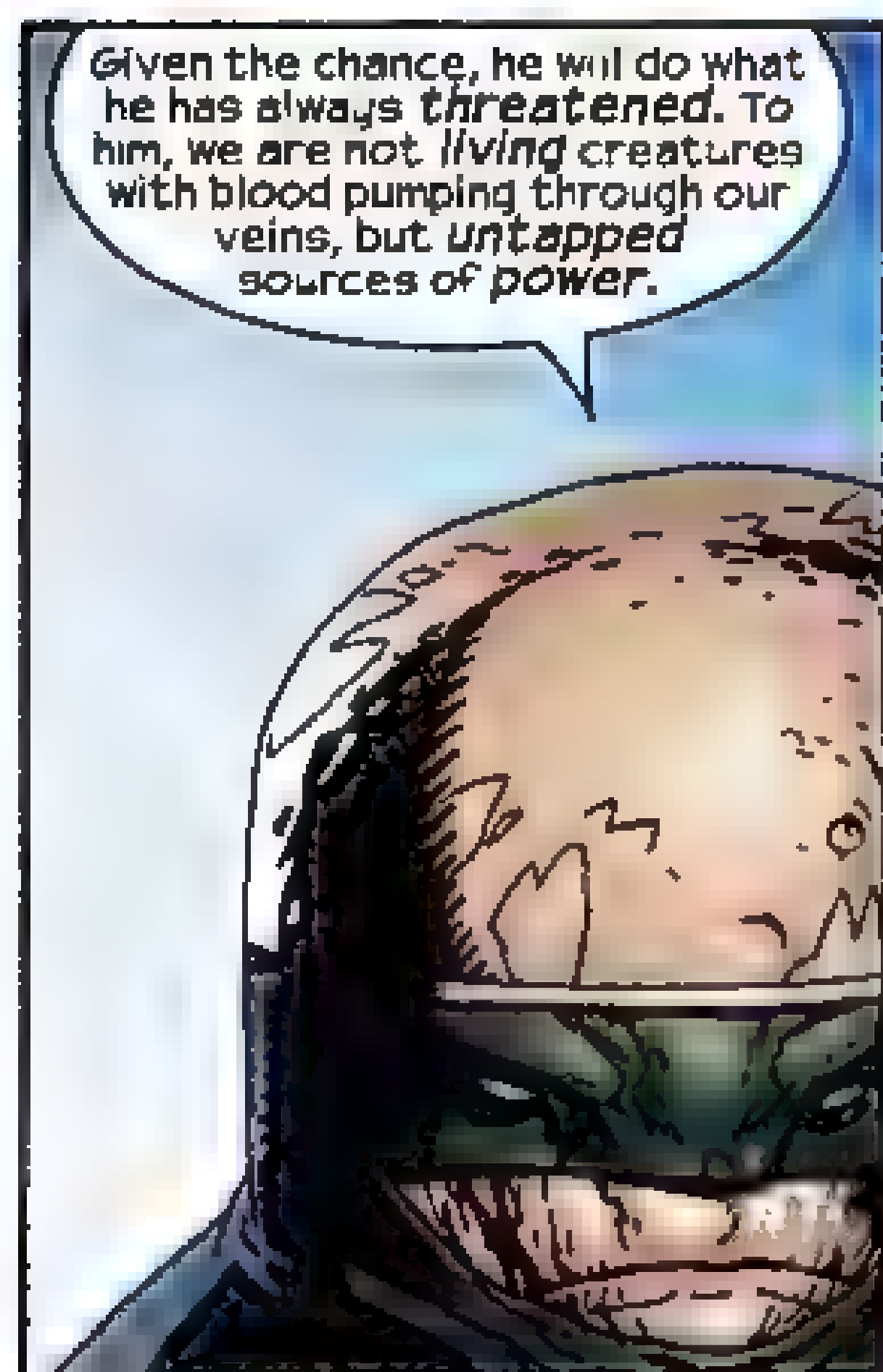
The glorious city of ATTILAN, the home of the Inhumans, is actually a massive vessel that migrates from locale to locale.

They run for their preservation.

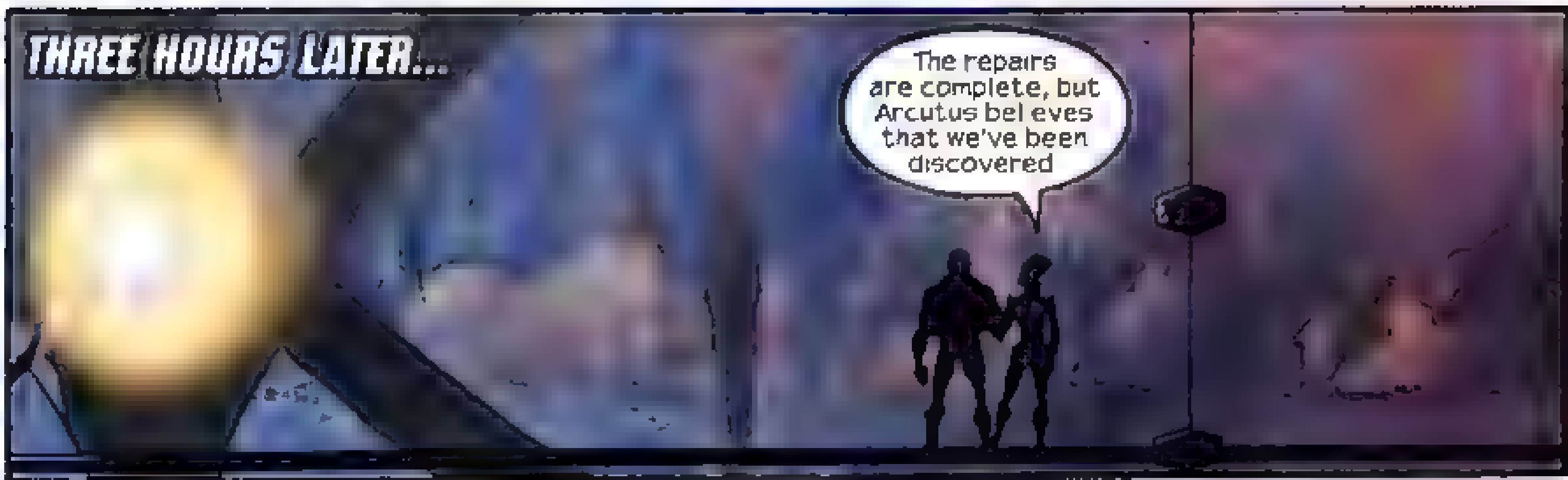
They flee to ensure their way of life.

The Inhumans run in fear.







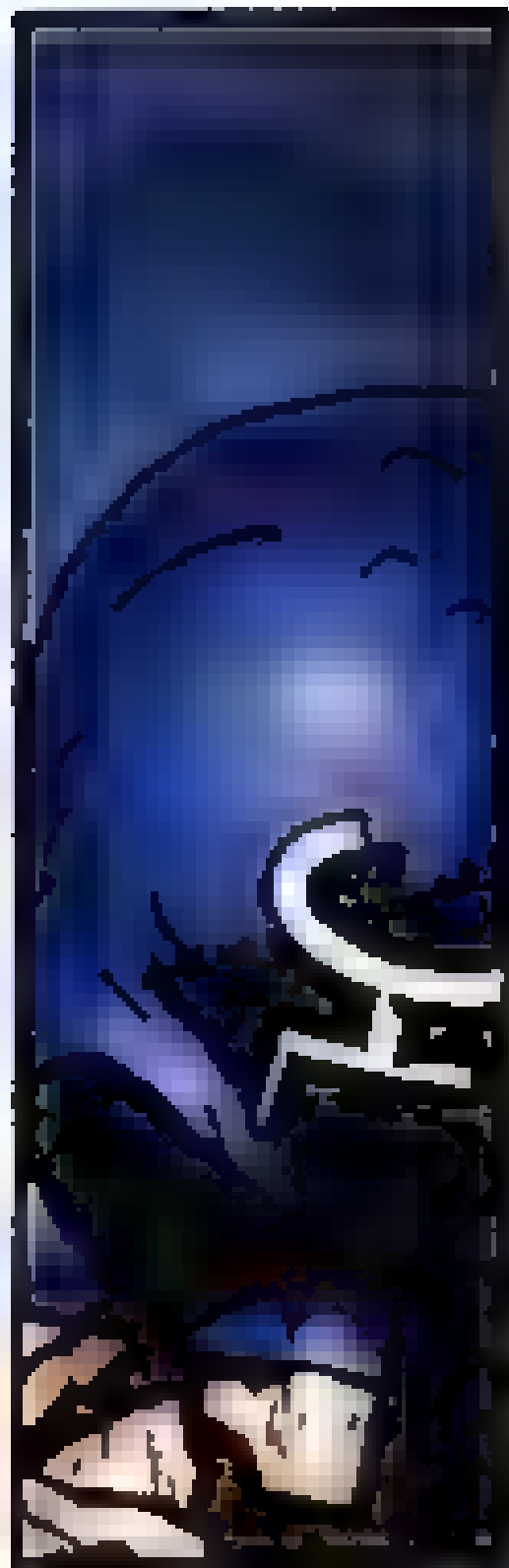


THREE HOURS LATER...

The repairs are complete, but Arcutus believes that we've been discovered



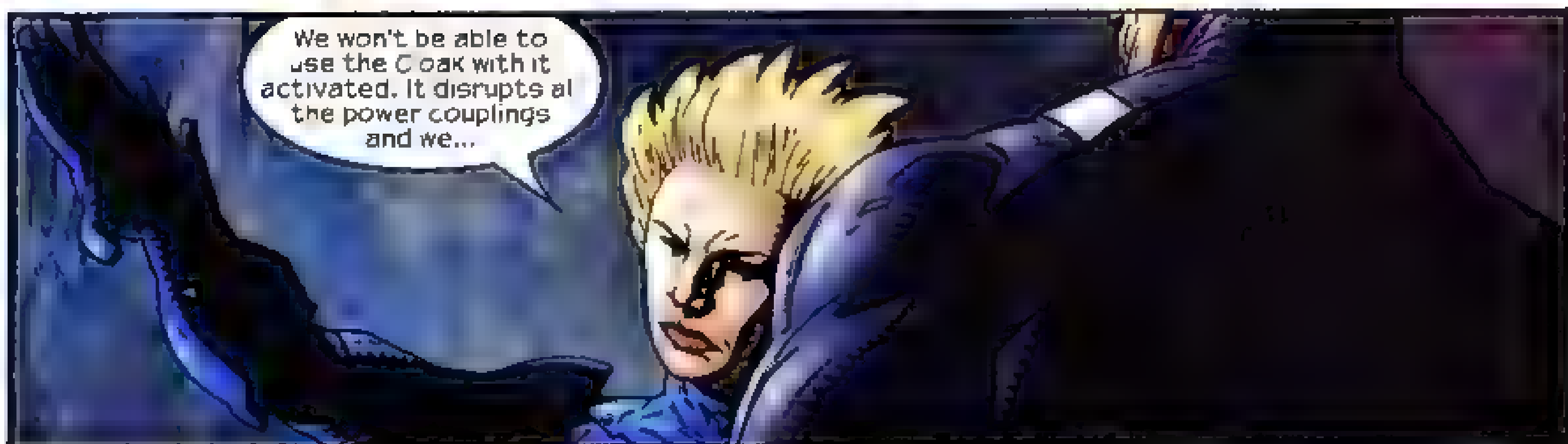
Black Bolt... please... tell me what... what we're to do?



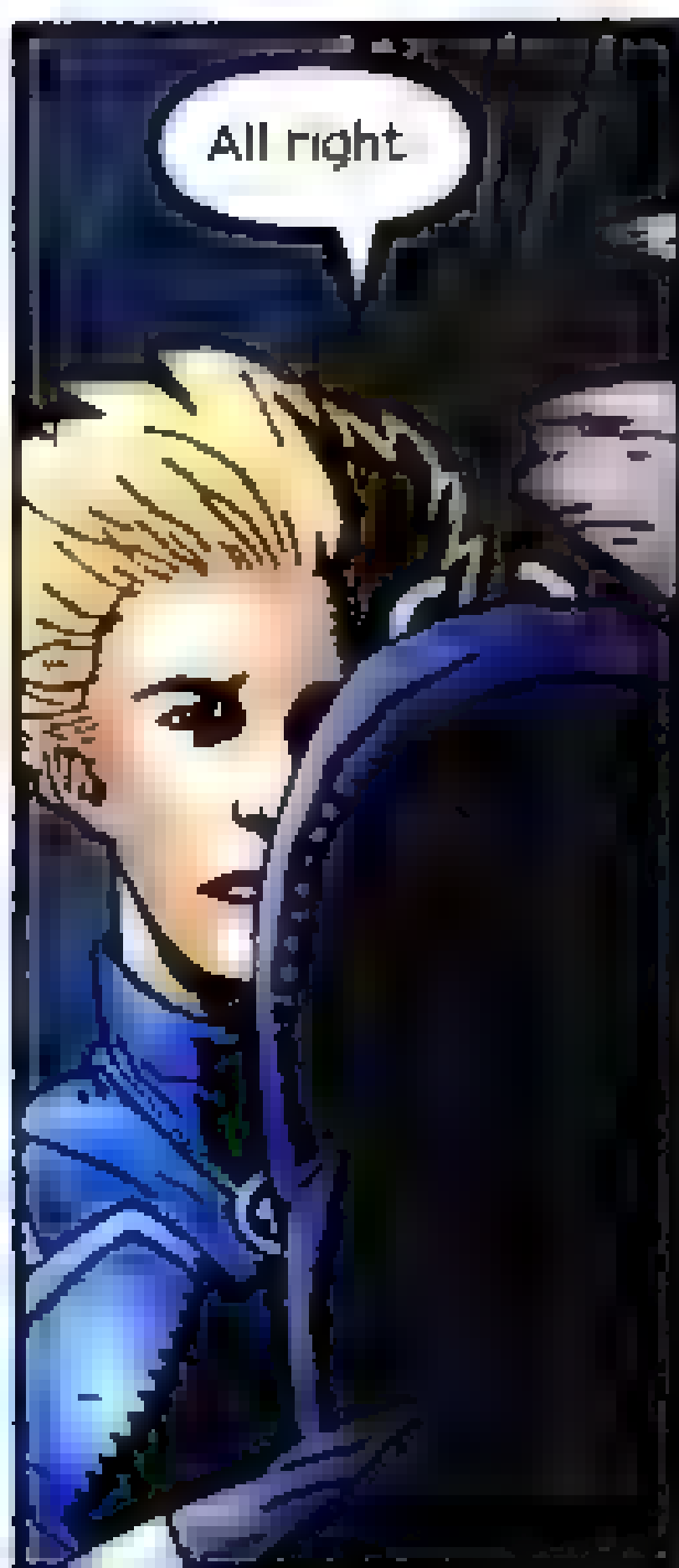
G? The G... barrier? Oh... oh. Yes..



Our last gift from Reed... yes



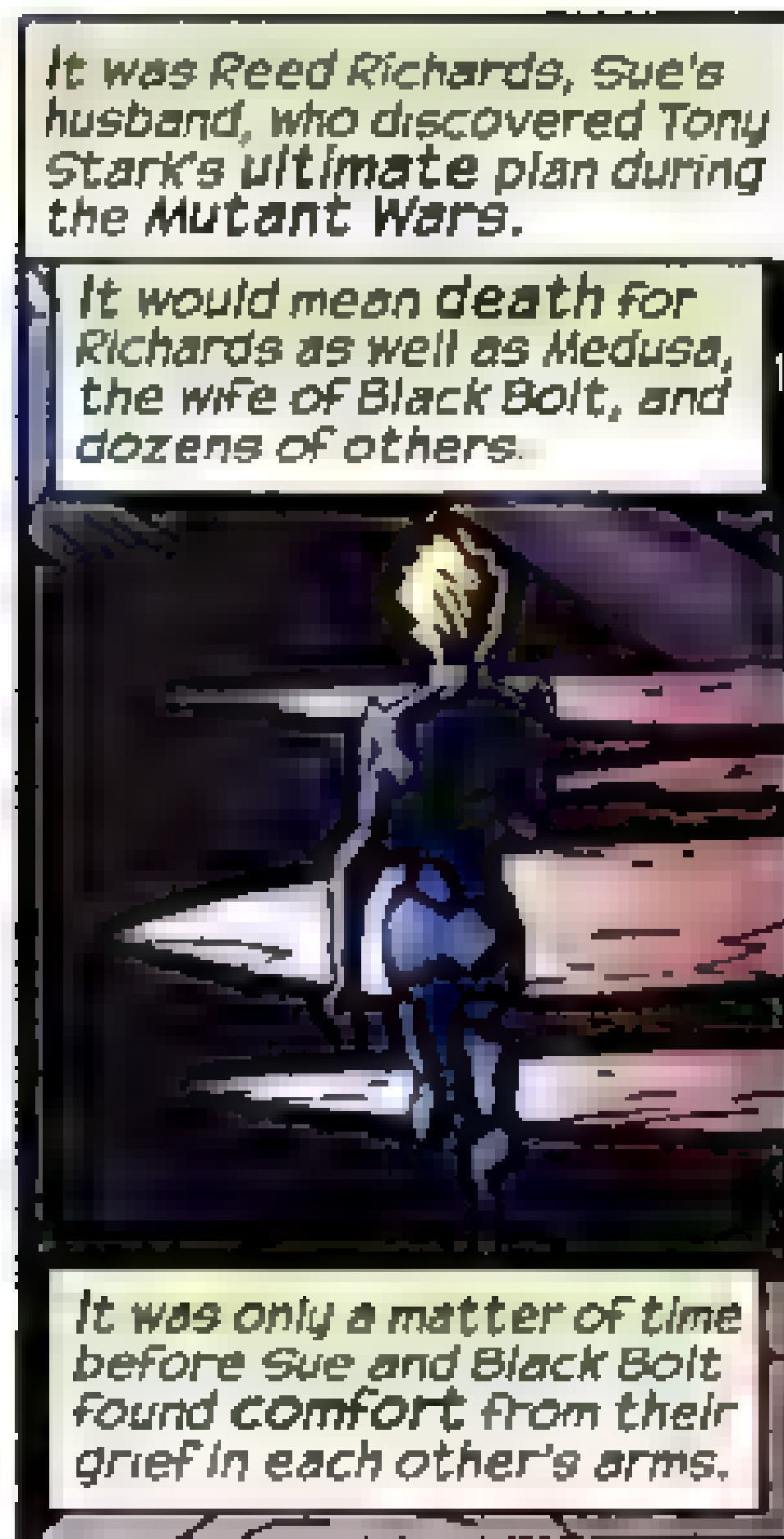
We won't be able to use the Coak with it activated. It disrupts all the power couplings and we...



All right



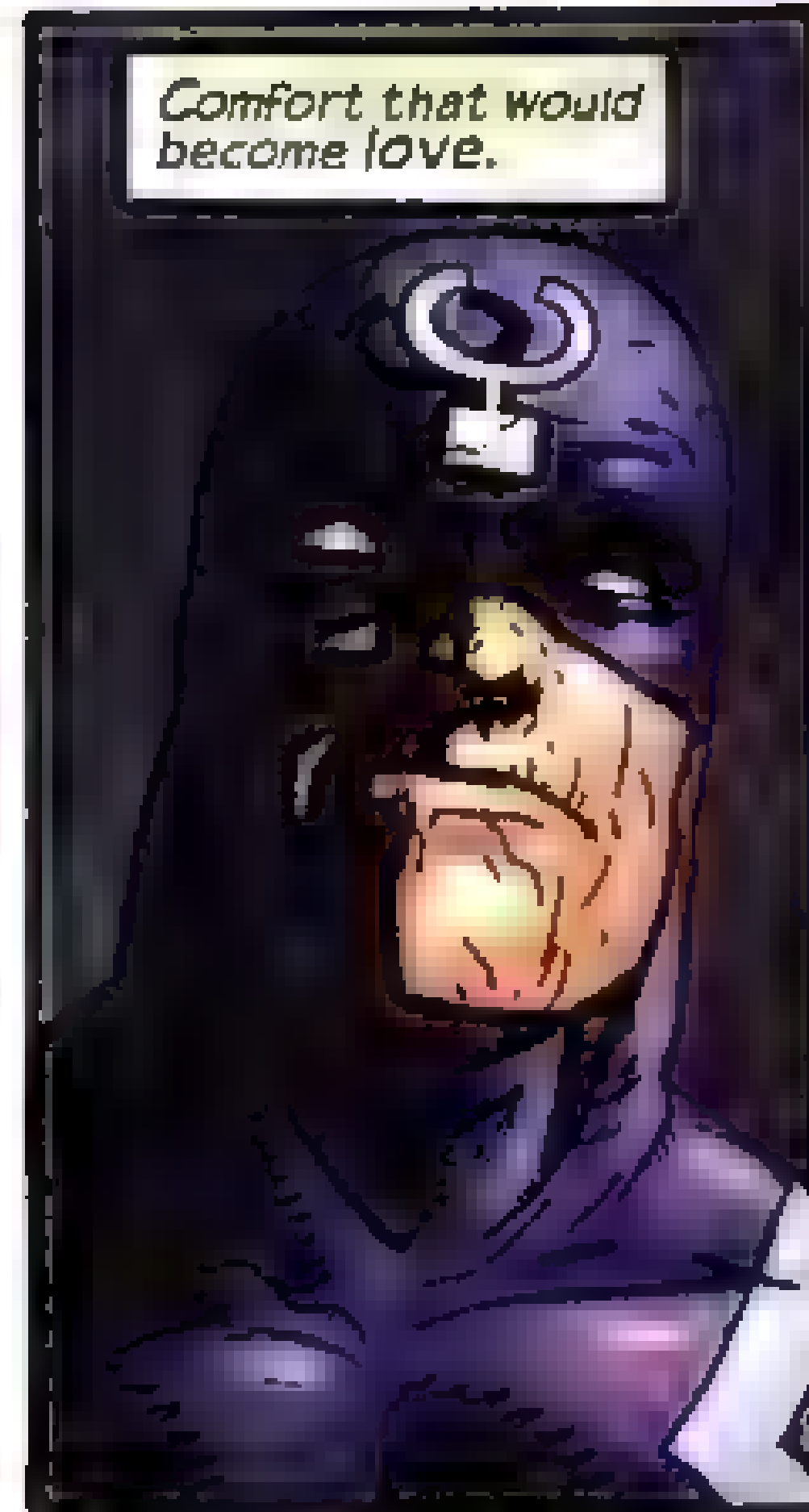
I'll go tell Arcutus to begin the necessary preparations.



It was Reed Richards, Sue's husband, who discovered Tony Stark's ultimate plan during the Mutant Wars.

It would mean death for Richards as well as Medusa, the wife of Black Bolt, and dozens of others.

It was only a matter of time before Sue and Black Bolt found comfort from their grief in each other's arms.



Comfort that would become love.



## THE CITY OF ATILAN'S ENGINE ROOM...

Sue Richards has loved just two men in her life. Reed Richards was a man so full of knowledge that he could barely restrain himself from speech.

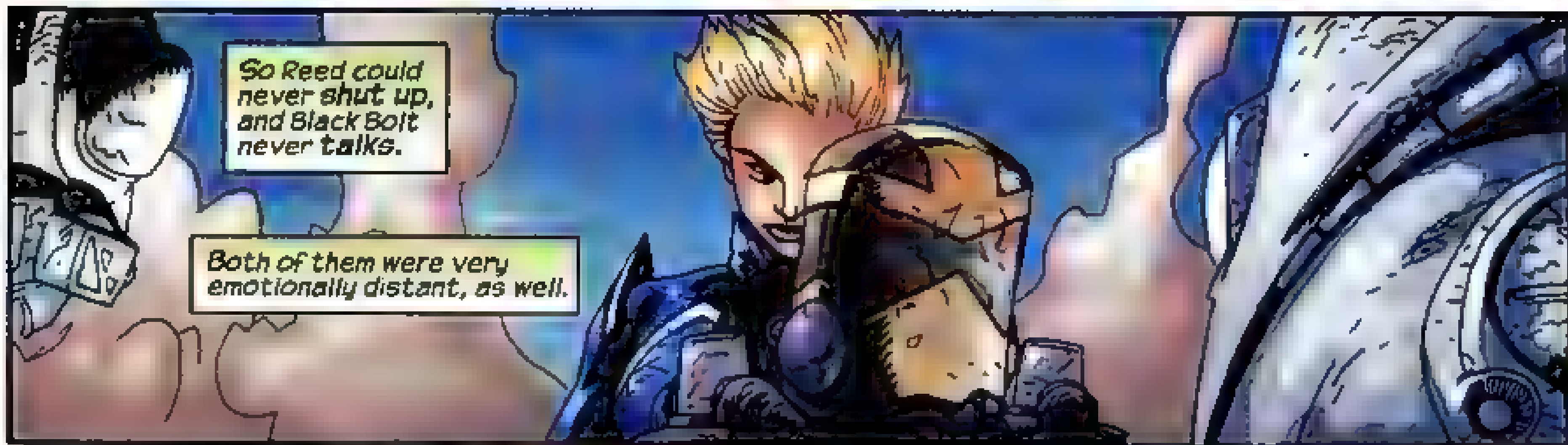
The other, Black Bolt, is cursed with an uncontrollable power brought on by his voice.

One whisper from his lips could topple a mountain. A spoken word could level entire cities.

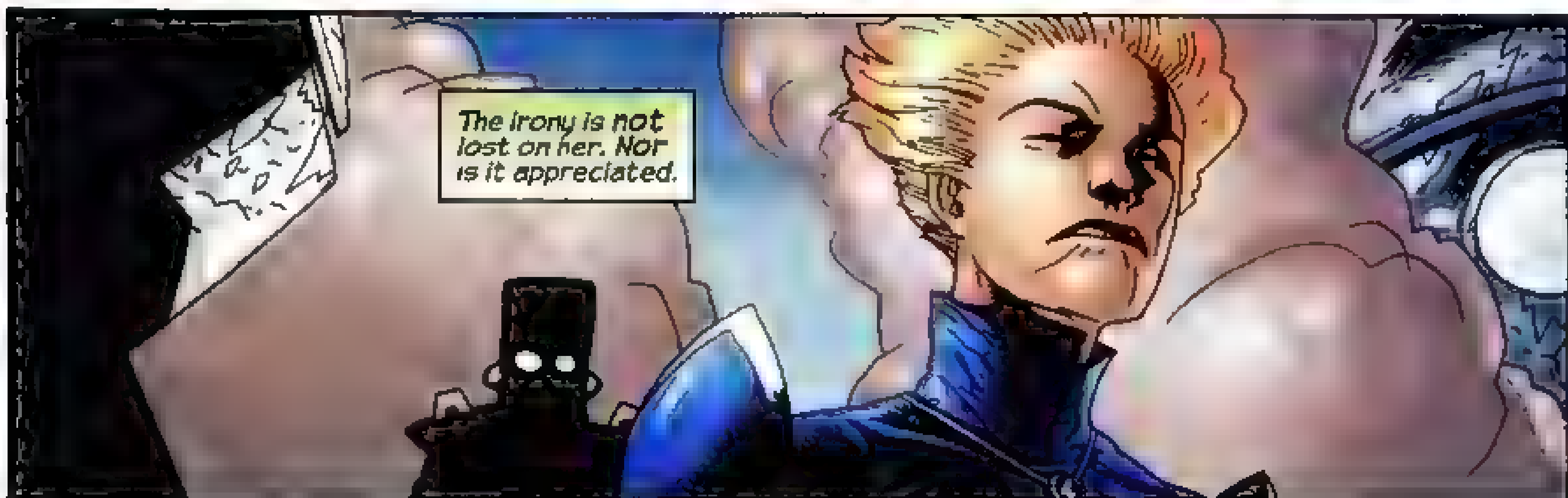


So Reed could never shut up, and Black Bolt never talks.

Both of them were very emotionally distant, as well.



The irony is not lost on her. Nor is it appreciated.





**NEW YORK CITY  
THE OVAL OFFICE...**

Mr. President, we have confirmation on satellite. Attilan is visible just 100 miles off the coast of the Marshall Islands in the Pacific

Do we have a "go"?

Go. Take them alive. Or at least most of them

**OVER THE PACIFIC OCEAN...**

This is Generator Alpha. Operation Impound is a go! I repeat-- we are a go!

Battalions Alpha, Beta, Delta, Gamma-- follow my lead!

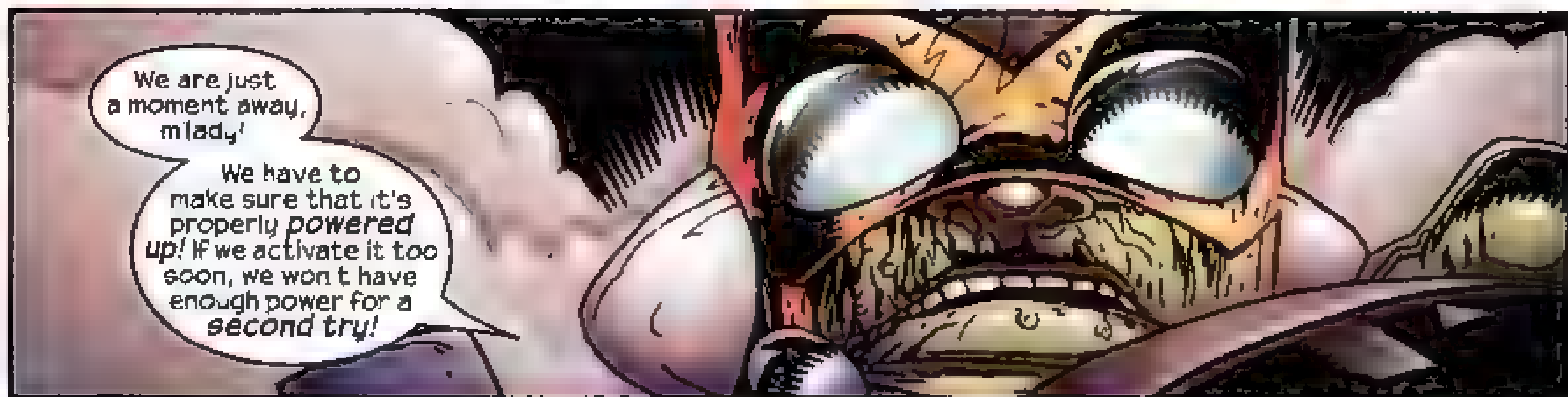
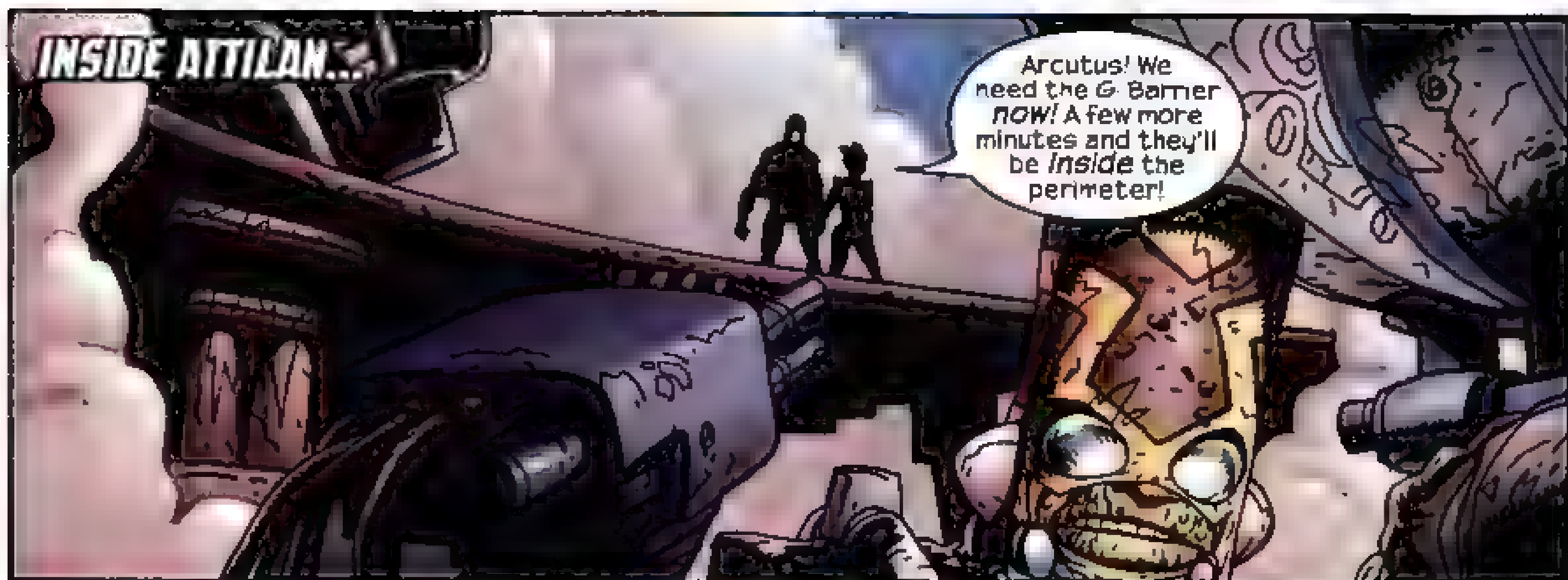
We have visual contact with the Inhumans. A division of flyers are coming at us.

Prepare for evasive action. Capture, not kill Repeat--

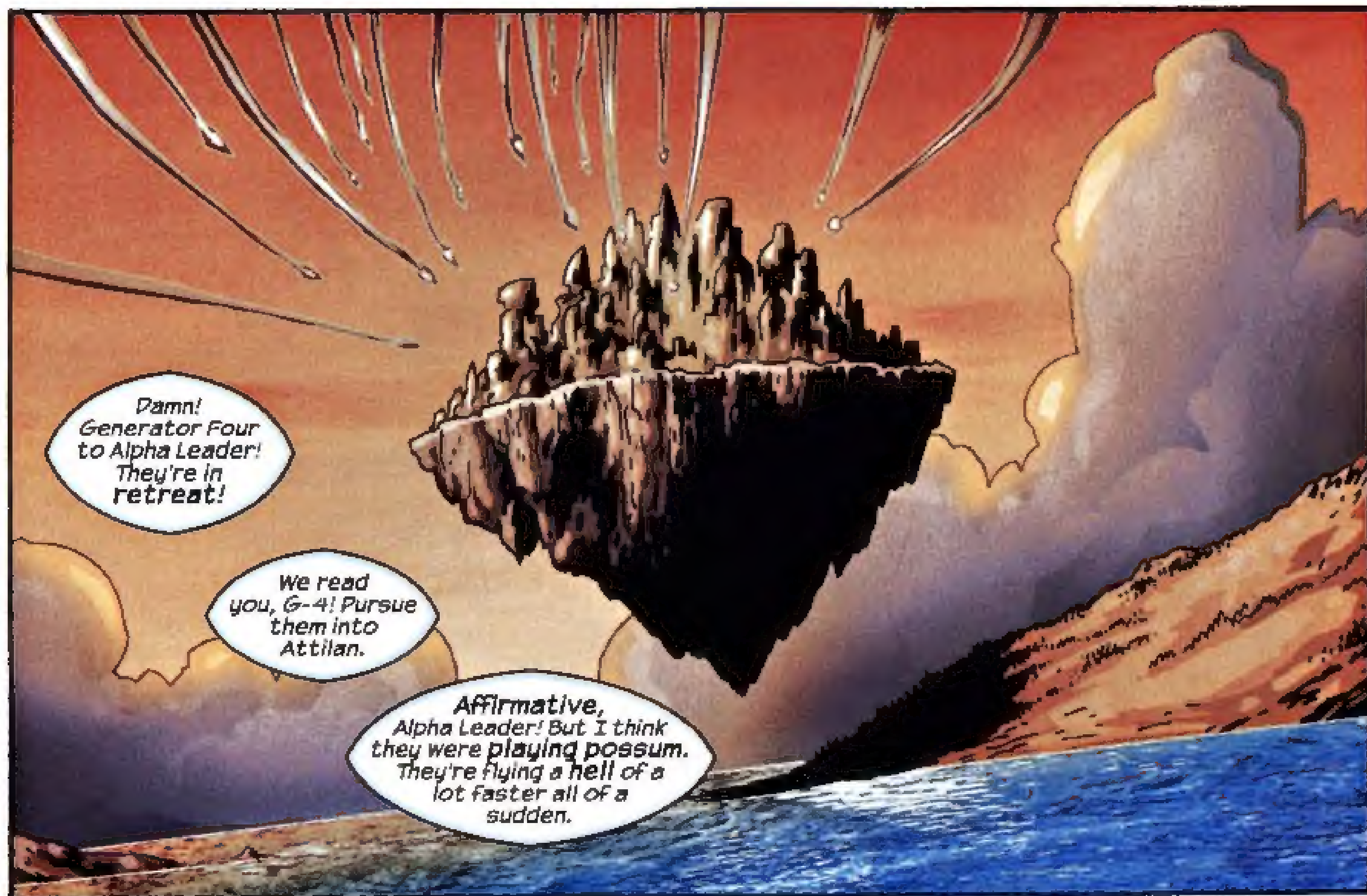








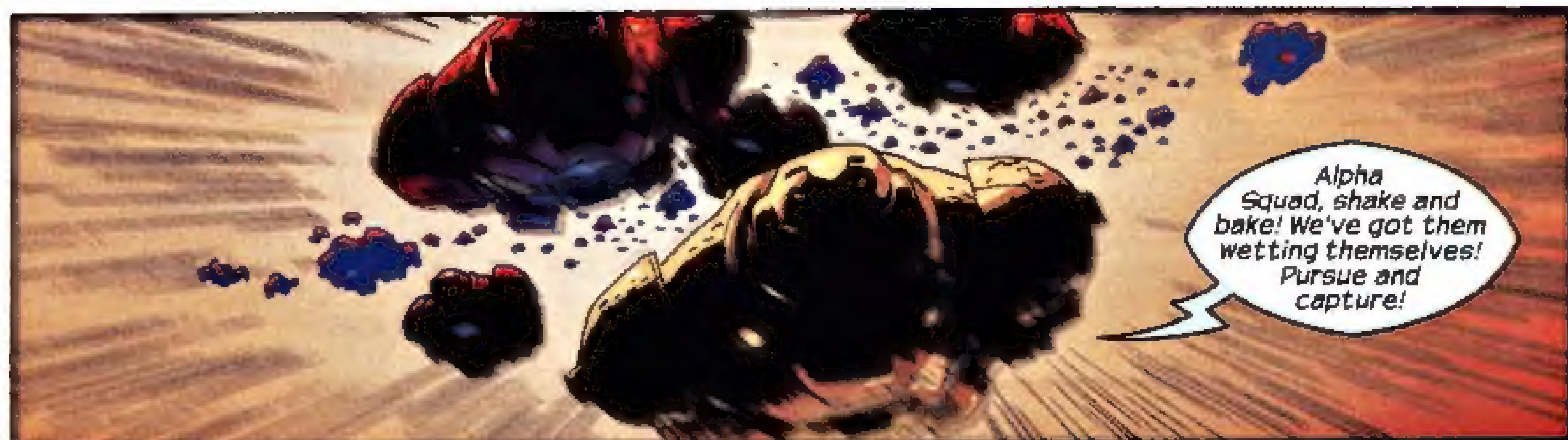




Damn!  
Generator Four  
to Alpha Leader!  
They're in  
retreat!

We read  
you, G-4! Pursue  
them into  
Attilan.

Affirmative,  
Alpha Leader! But I think  
they were playing possum.  
They're flying a hell of a  
lot faster all of a  
sudden.



Alpha  
Squad, shake and  
bake! We've got them  
wetting themselves!  
Pursue and  
capture!



This is  
Brakon! We  
are all *within*  
the perimeter,  
Arcutus!



Repeat--  
all flyers are  
inside the perimeter,  
Arcutus! We're  
safe!

Then  
you will be  
the *only*  
ones.

CRA-KAACK!





Before Tony Stark was President, before the Mutant War, the demigod Galactus, the World Devourer, came to Earth to feed upon its energies.

Arriving in a weakened state, the mighty being was defeated by Earth's most powerful heroes. While Galactus lay dying, Reed Richards struck a bargain. He would save Galactus' life in exchange for assurances that he would never return to feast on Earth.

Galactus agreed. To ensure that he be forced to keep his word, Galactus left Reed Richards the means to create a force field that even Galactus could not breach.

Before his death, Richards left it to the Inhumans.

He knew that Galactus was not the only power-hungry creature to desire Earth...





## THE OVAL OFFICE...

...some were born here.

Sir... the activation of the shield alone sent a shock wave that... well...

...they're gone, sir. All four battalions. Nearly 40,000 in all--

And the force field is impenetrable.

Yes. It's disintegrating everything we're throwing at it.

Keep trying. Report back if there's any change.

Yes, Mr. President.

Hopeless...

What in hell--

BLOONKI!

All of you stay right where you are or you'll be dead where you stand!

Hello, President Stark.





I'm  
*Gambit.*

We're  
*Weapon X...*

...and we're  
here to set things  
*right.*